

AMERICAN TELEGRAPH

COMPARED WITH ENGLAND'S GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH.

Belting the Globe-The Western Union's 750,000 Miles of Wire-The Vice-President of the Line Talks About It.

Some feeling has been aroused in telegraph circles by reason of recent publications of the chief engineer of British telegraphs, who claimed, after a visit to this country, that the English compared favorably with their American cousins.

To learn his views upon the subject, a reporter called yesterday on Colonel R. C. Clowry, vice-president and general superintendent of the Western Union Telegraph company, and chairman of the committee on electricity of the World's fair.

"Colonel Clowry, did you read the telegraphic dispatches recently published in which Mr. Preece, the chief engineer of the British telegraphs, is quoted as saying that there was only one branch of electrical industry in which the English compared favorably with their American cousins, that being telegraphy, in which they were certainly ahead?"

"Yes, I read the article you mention."

"I suppose you also read the interview with Mr. Preece, published in the New York Sun last August?"

"Yes, I read that also."

"What is there to be said in reply to those statements of Mr. Preece?"

"Well, a good deal may be said in reply to the interview. In Mr. Preece's interview in the Sun, he states that the telegraph facilities in England are greater than they are here, for we go to every town and every village, irrespective of the fact that they pay or do not pay, while in the United States the places that pay appear to me to be the only ones that receive the attention of the telegraph companies." In reply to that statement I quote from the annual report of the British postmaster-general, who says: "The department has ceased to require the payment of the capital outlay for telegraph extensions made under guarantee, and the guarantee is now required to cover only the expense of working and maintenance. By act of parliament the rural sanitary authorities are empowered to undertake guarantees for telegraph offices at places within their districts and to defray the cost out of the rates. As the result of this concession there has been a considerable extension of the telegraph system in the rural districts." It will be seen by this that the telegraph system of Great Britain is not extended to small towns except under a guarantee to cover the working and maintenance. The statement of the postmaster-general is, therefore, a direct contradiction to that of Mr. Preece.

THE WESTERN UNION SYSTEM.

"Under the Western Union system the telegraph extends to every railway station, great and small, in the United States, without expense to the public, and we are only too glad to extend our lines to other towns not connected with railroads, where, as in Great Britain, the expense of working and maintenance is guaranteed. Notwithstanding the statement of Mr. Preece that the telegraph in England extends to every town and village, it is a fact that there are telegraph offices established at less than one-third of the postoffices."

"I notice, also, that when asked by the Sun reporter if he considered government telegraphs a success in England, Mr. Preece said: 'Yes, they are undoubtedly a success in England.' On the other hand, the British chancellor of the exchequer, in his report before the house of commons last April the annual budget, said in his speech thereupon, 'that the operations of the telegraph government telegraphs for the fiscal year showed a "bad revenue," and an excess of actual working expenses over receipts of \$1,500,000 (about \$2,000,000), which result was due to a miscalculation, and for anything that can be seen to the contrary it is a revenue which is going from bad to worse and not likely to improve.' According to these figures the British government has operated the telegraph system for about twenty-two years at a loss of about \$1,000,000 a year. The telegraph is used mostly by bankers, merchants, manufacturers, brokers, and speculators, so that, according to the British plan, a large majority of the people who never use the telegraph have to make up this yearly deficit of \$1,000,000 in order to afford the parties first named low rates for their messages. But, while for short distances the world rates in England are lower than they are here, still, owing to the different methods of paying for telegraphs for counting the number of words in a message (in Great Britain the words in the address and signature are counted, while we do not count them), the cost to the sender on an average message is about the same. The long-distance rates on the continent, and between England and the continent, are much higher than those for similar distances in the United States."

BELTING THE GLOBE WITH WIRES.

"Regarding the statement in the Sun article that Mr. Preece's department in the Western Union and American Bell Telephone companies rolled up into one, and half a dozen sub-marine cable companies thrown in, etc., I will merely draw attention to the fact that the British telegraph system comprises but about 30,000 miles of line, 150,000 miles of wire and 8,000 offices, extending over an area of about 320,000 square miles; while the Western Union telegraph system alone comprises about 750,000 miles of line, 750,000 miles of wire, 8,000 miles of ocean sub-marine cables and 22,000 offices, extending throughout an area of more than 8,000,000 square miles, being, therefore, about quadruple the British government telegraph system, and extending over an area twenty-four times as great. The capital account of the cost of the British government of its telegraph system is \$25,000,000. If the Western Union Telegraph company's capital account was in proportion to its property in the same ratio it would be over \$200,000,000."

"Mr. Preece in his interview says that: 'In England the telegraphs belong to the people; they are maintained by the people; they are supervised by the people; for very Englishman has the right to complain for any delay or anything wrong, not only through the press, but in the houses of parliament, and every complaint of every kind receives as much attention as though it came through the houses of parliament.'"

"Now an examination into the conditions under which telegraphic business is transacted in the two countries will show that in the United States there is sharp competition, two competing companies having always been in the field—sometimes more; and that our business men fully appreciate the value of competition as an incentive to prompt and efficient service, knowing that if one company does not give satisfaction they can transfer their patronage to another. Again, as the telegraph service in America is essentially under the control of the people (being amenable to the law), the law is every inhabitant of the country, should errors or unnecessary delays occur in the transmission of messages the public have recourse through the courts and can do recover damages, and it is a crime under the law for employees of telegraph companies to divulge or make improper use of the contents of messages."

GOVERNMENT ESPIONAGE OVER PRIVATE MESSAGES.

"On the other hand, where the gov-

ernment has a monopoly of the telegraph business, as is the case in England and on the continent, there is no competition and no redress whatever for delay or error in the transmission of messages over and above the refunding of the actual tolls paid upon the message, which may possibly be secured after a correspondence more or less prolonged, and the government, having direct control of the telegraphs, exercise an espionage over the contents of all messages transmitted, which would not be tolerated by the people of the United States. Now, I wish to call attention to the fact that the employees of the competing telegraph companies of the United States are, in the main, persons who have been in the business all their lives, the tenure of their positions depending upon their efficiency. But, if the telegraph business were controlled by the government, political loyalty to the party in power would be more apt to be regarded as the gauge of qualification than ability to perform the duties of the position.

"Fourteen years ago Mr. Preece first visited this country, and at that time I understood him to say that there was not an operator in Europe who read by sound, although the sound-reading system had been in vogue in this country for upward of thirty years. On his return to England he stated in a paper read before a society of which he was a member that England was twenty years behind the United States in its telegraphic development, and for this he was severely criticized by some of the English papers. About eight years later Mr. Preece again visited this country and stated that they were making considerable progress in the direction of introducing the American, or Morse, sound-reading system. He again visited the United States this year and informed me that it would be very difficult to distinguish an Englishman from a Western Union telegraph office, they were so much alike, and that the American, Morse, or sound reading system was in general use in England. It appears, therefore, that Mr. Preece has introduced the American system in his own country, and in this he has shown great wisdom, as it is, and always has been, very much superior to the European system. If it had not been for Mr. Preece's visits to the United States, and his ability to adopt our system and improvements, I am afraid that the English would still be dragging along with the old-fashioned dial needle instruments, as they are singularly averse to what they call 'American innovations.'"

FOREIGN ELECTRICIANS ASTONISHED.

"During the past summer I have met and conversed with representative electricians from nearly all parts of the world, who came here to visit the exposition. Each of them has inspected the Western Union office and system in Chicago, and in every case has stated distinctly that the progress of telegraphy in the United States was very far in advance of what it was in Europe. Our instruments, switchboards, etc., appeared to be a revelation to most of them. Then again, the United States is the only country in which telegraph lines are operated direct from dynamo current. In Europe they still adhere to the old battery system (in some cases using storage batteries), and the gentlemen who visited me were surprised to see the great advance we have made in this direction. The only European instruments which we have adopted in this country are the English Wheatstone, which we work to advantage on some of our long circuits, while in England they are gradually substituting our Morse system, including the duplex, quadruplex, etc., for their old machinery. In fact, an electric manufacturer of the company of Chicago is shipping telegraphic instruments to nearly all parts of Europe. It appears to me, therefore, that the United States is very much in advance of all European countries in all branches of electrical industries, the telegraph and telephone included, and, in fact, in all mechanical industries, very nearly all of the great inventions having been made in America."

"Have you anything to say in reference to the electrical exhibit at the World's fair?"

"The electrical exhibit was a very fine one; but no satisfactory exhibit of electrical industries in the United States could be given within the confines of any single building. To appreciate the extent of our industries one should travel all over the country and see the thousands of cities and towns which are lighted by electricity and furnished with transportation for the people by means of electric street railways running at a rate of speed varying from five to twenty-five miles an hour. This list which I hand you will give you some figures from which you can form an idea of the extent of exhibits from the different countries, as they appeared in the Electricity building at the World's fair."

The list shows the following figures:

United States occupied.....	Square feet.
Germany occupied.....	141,397
France occupied.....	24,172
Great Britain occupied.....	20,333
Japan occupied.....	5,071
Austria occupied.....	1,103
Italy occupied.....	1,000
Other countries, less than (each).....	1,000

Laying a Table.

The cloth, of course, must be spotless and laid absolutely straight—who can remember the irritation of having had to sit at a table where the cloth was ever so slightly "wrung"? All the glass must sparkle and the silver must be polished until every spoon represents a miniature mirror. The serviettes must be well and smartly folded, and the bread evenly cut with a sharp knife kept for that purpose.

At each corner must be placed well filled castors of pepper and salt and freshly made mustard. More castors of the same kind should be placed at intervals down the table between each guest.


The candles must be non-smokers, and the lamps freshly trimmed, while their shades must be as spotless as your own gowns and as elaborate as means will allow. Far better to have no shades at all than to use those that are shabby. These little ornaments are, however, so easily manufactured at home that there is not the slightest need for us to deny ourselves such "pretties." Personally, I like the shades to carry out, as nearly as possible, the prevailing color of the floral decorations.

And now for the flowers themselves. These, to be successful, should be as simple as possible, and by this I mean that they should be simply arranged, and all of one kind. Never be persuaded, for instance, to mix roses and geraniums—they are both beautiful, but do not blend well. Tall "spiky" flowers arrange better for dinner table. Or choose there is no lack. Early in the year we have those exquisite yellow daffodils and the whole family of jonquils. Later we have the huge eye-daisies, mixed with the feathery field grasses, than which, in my eyes, no decoration could be more lovely. I could go on for an hour suggesting suitable blossoms, where to place them, and how to arrange them, but I will merely suggest that the blooms themselves be arranged in wide-mouthed specimen glasses, sold for the purpose, and that we use as many as possible of such flower-filled vases.

A good center decoration is formed by a bowl of pale pink winter hyacinths, which should be hidden by carefully arranged moss.

And here I should like to be quite unceremonious that I am not speaking of "dinner parties," but of the every night dinner table, which should always be just as freshly and ceremoniously arranged as if company were expected. Then, indeed, company in the form of "Edwin's" friend, brought in unexpectedly, is ever welcome, and "Edwin" himself, realizing and thoroughly appreciating this fact, will pre-

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Celery <th>Queen Olives</th> <td>Mashed Potatoes</td>	Queen Olives	Mashed Potatoes
Bolled Ox Tongue, Sauce Diable <td>Mince Pie<td>Honey Drop Corn</td></td>	Mince Pie <td>Honey Drop Corn</td>	Honey Drop Corn
Chicken Saute, Champignons <td>Spaghetti a l'italienne<td>Pineapple Fritters, Brandy Sauce</td></td>	Spaghetti a l'italienne <td>Pineapple Fritters, Brandy Sauce</td>	Pineapple Fritters, Brandy Sauce
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